Freudenberg Medical Establishes Solid Backup Infrastructure with ExaGrid and Veeam

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Gabe Feindel
IT Systems Manager

Key Benefits:

- Easily scalable system was imperative in infrastructure design and DR planning
- ExaGrid's landing zone enables quick recovery after server crash
- Retention goals met due to ExaGrid-Veeam combined data deduplication
- Web-based GUI allows for 'single pane' management of multiple sites

Customer Overview

Freudenberg Medical is a global partner for the design, development, and manufacture of innovative medical devices and components. With 11 manufacturing operations and more than 1,500 associates worldwide, Freudenberg Medical offers a wide range of capabilities from high precision silicone and thermoplastic components and tubing to drug coatings, finished devices, and subassemblies for minimally invasive, handheld, and catheter-based devices.
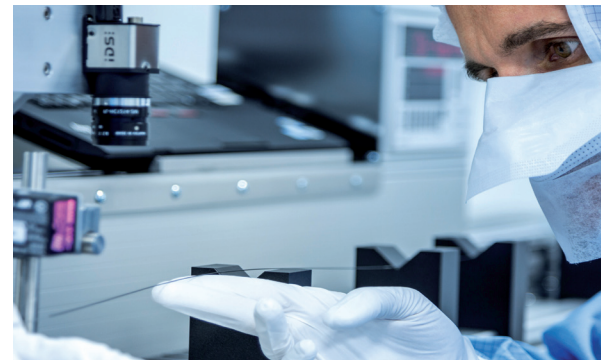
Establishing an Infrastructure

When Gabe Feindel started working at Freudenberg Medical as its IT systems manager, the company was in the early stages of shaping its IT infrastructure. The company was using Veeam to back up server data and replicate backup data offsite.

Feindel began looking into purpose-built appliances as a more reliable storage target for Freudenberg's backup data. During his search, Feindel ran a side-by-side comparison of ExaGrid and HPE StoreOnce, and chose ExaGrid. Among other things, ExaGrid's unique landing zone and exceptional support team stood out to him during his evaluation of the two products. "I specifically chose ExaGrid because of the proactive support they provide. We operate a lean team and do not have the time to babysit the backup system. ExaGrid takes care of that for me."

Data deduplication was another major factor in Feindel's search while designing Freudenberg Medical's infrastructure. "I was shooting for a three-month retention, which would be pretty expensive without deduplication. It definitely makes a huge difference when it comes to considering costs," said Feindel.

Easily Managed Solution Inspires Confidence

Feindel installed ExaGrid appliances in eight of Freudenberg Medical's locations worldwide, retaining Veeam as the company's backup application. He found the installation process to be very

straightforward at all of the various locations. "I had the ExaGrid appliances drop shipped to each of our facilities, and one of our local help desk staff racked and cabled each one. I worked with my ExaGrid support engineer who set up the systems, updated the firmware, and got everything running and configured according to best practices. Overall, installation went very smoothly.

"Backing up Freudenberg's systems is one of my most critical responsibilities, and that was keeping me up at night when I first started in my position. Once we had ExaGrid in place, I could focus on improving service rather than worrying every night about whether a server would crash and what I'd do about it. I trust ExaGrid, which is more than I can say for some of the backup tools that I've used in the past."

Currently, each of Freudenberg Medical's systems replicates to a system at one of the other seven locations. "One of the selling points of ExaGrid is that you can just add another appliance to an existing system for additional storage capacity. We're planning to expand an ExaGrid system at one of our

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West Coast sites, which will then become the DR site for our main office."

Feindel finds that ExaGrid's GUI makes it easy to monitor backups at Freudenberg Medical's many locations. "I see them all in one web-based dashboard. I can check it in the morning to make sure all is well and then go about my day. It's helpful to see everything in one place."

Deduplication Helps Meet Retention Goals

Most of Freudenberg Medical's data consists of file server data, as well as SQL and Oracle databases, which Feindel backs up in daily incrementals (which take about 20 minutes) to create a weekly synthetic full.

Using ExaGrid with Veeam, Feindel has been able to meet his goal of three months of retention at each location. "We are keeping a three-month retention at our largest site, and still have 35% free. I'm very pleased with the fact that ExaGrid is able to deduplicate at 4.7 times over what Veeam already does. Some of our other sites are achieving ratios of as high as 13:1."

Veeam uses the information from VMware and Hyper-V and provides deduplication on a "per-job" basis, finding the matching areas of all the virtual disks within a backup job and using metadata to reduce the overall footprint of the backup data. Veeam also has a "dedupe friendly" compression setting which further reduces the size of the Veeam backups in a way that allows the ExaGrid system to achieve further deduplication. This approach typically achieves a 2:1 deduplication ratio.

ExaGrid is architected from the ground up to protect virtualized environments and provide deduplication as backups are written. ExaGrid will achieve a 3:1 up to 5:1 additional deduplication rate. The net result is a combined Veeam and ExaGrid deduplication rate of 6:1 upwards to 10:1, which greatly reduces the amount of disk storage required.

Crisis Averted Thanks to ExaGrid's Landing Zone

It didn't take long for Feindel to appreciate choosing ExaGrid as his storage solution. "Shortly after I had installed our ExaGrid systems, a production server crashed, and we had to replace almost all of its hard drives. However, I was able to recover the whole system completely – at full productivity – within four hours. Without ExaGrid, that event would have been disastrous!"

ExaGrid writes backups directly to a disk landing zone. Available system cycles are utilized to perform deduplication and offsite replication for an optimal recovery point at the disaster recovery site. Once complete, the onsite data is protected and immediately available in its full undeduplicated form for fast restores, VM Instant Recoveries, and tape copies while the offsite data is ready for disaster recovery.

ExaGrid and Veeam can instantly recover a VMware virtual machine by running it directly from the ExaGrid appliance in the event that the primary storage VM becomes unavailable. This is possible because of ExaGrid's "landing zone" – a high-speed cache on the ExaGrid appliance that retains the most recent backups in complete form. Once the primary storage environment has been brought back to a working state, the VM running on the ExaGrid appliance can then be migrated to primary storage for continued operation.

ExaGrid and Veeam – 'A Joy to Work With'

"I've worked with other backup applications and tools, and it was almost a full-time job just babysitting them. Veeam and ExaGrid make backup and recovery a joy to work with, whereas normally, it's a drag," said Feindel.

The combination of ExaGrid's and Veeam's industry-leading virtual server data protection solutions allows customers to utilize Veeam Backup & Replication in VMware, vSphere, and Microsoft Hyper-V virtual environments on ExaGrid's disk-based backup system. This combination provides fast backups and efficient data storage as well as replication to an offsite location for disaster recovery.

The ExaGrid system fully leverages Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in backup-to-disk capabilities and ExaGrid's zone-level data deduplication for additional data (and cost) reduction over standard disk solutions. Customers can use Veeam Backup & Replication's built-in source-side deduplication in concert with ExaGrid's disk-based backup system with zone-level deduplication to further shrink backups.

About ExaGrid

ExaGrid provides hyper-converged secondary storage (HCSS) for backup with a unique landing zone and scale-out architecture. The landing zone enables the fastest backups, restores, and instant VM recoveries. The scale-out architecture includes full appliances in a scalable system and ensures a fixed-length backup window as data grows, eliminating expensive and disruptive forklift upgrades. Learn more at **www.exagrid.com**.